

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**April 3, 2008**

**WORKSHOP MEETING**

The Workshop meeting of the Township of West Milford Planning Board was called to order at 8:48 p.m. by Chairman Andrew Gargano following the Regular meeting, with the Legal Notice read, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Bettina Bieri, Richard McFadden, Douglas Ott, Chris Rosica, Clinton Smith, Geoffrey Syme, Councilman Philip Weisbecker, Michael Siesta, Dennis Kirwan, Chairman Andrew Gargano, Planning Director William Drew, GIS Specialist Rob Sparkes.

Absent: Steven Castronova.

Chairman Gargano asked Michael Siesta to sit on the Board for Mr. Castronova.

**PUBLIC PORTION**

David Watson Hallowell, West Milford, commended the Board for their work on the Walgreen's application, commented on William Drew's remarks during the Regular meeting about various development applications, and inquired about removal of a number of trees at a subdivision on Wooley Road. Mr. Drew advised that all work at that site was performed in compliance with the law and with Board approval. With no one else present wishing to address the Board, the Public Portion was closed by unanimous consent on a **motion** by Michael Siesta and a **second** by Councilman Philip Weisbecker.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**NJ DEP Dam Breach – West Milford Lake**

Dr. Les Lynn, environmental consultant, and Dr. Fred Lubnow from Princeton Hydro were in attendance to make a brief presentation to the Planning Board regarding the West Milford Lake Dam. The dam, classified by the NJDEP as a high hazard dam, is scheduled for breaching. Dr. Lynn explained that the Environmental Commission applied for a grant to have a study undertaken to devise plans for the lake site following breaching. Dr. Lynn gave an overview of the grant project, noting the four public meetings that the residents of the lake and Township were invited to attend. At the meetings they were given an opportunity to voice suggestions on remediation of the site following breaching of the dam.

Fred Lubnow addressed the Planning Board, noting that he is a lake ecologist while Dr. Lynn is a wetlands ecologist. He outlined his study, which included storm water testing, and advised that results indicated a high concentration of phosphorus. He explained the T.M.D.L's (Total Maximum Desirable Load) for the Board and other aspects of the study. Dr. Lubnow then reviewed the three concepts that evolved from the study and the public meetings. The dam breaching will result in approximately ¼ acre of water remaining. Following stabilization, the DEP will leave the site, making it susceptible to invasive plant species, and resulting in a negative impact to the environment. He advised that in review of the concepts, the Board should be cognizant that any earth moving that results in renovating the site will drive up the cost of the project. The first concept would involve a wetlands complex, which would be the least expensive, and the most passive, with planting of specific material to discourage invasive plant species. The second scenario would establish a stream to flow in a specific direction; this would include more engineering and design work. The third concept would create a riparian corridor and the cost would be much higher, approximately \$700,000. He responded that various funding could be available through grants when several Board members inquired about grant types and monies. Dr. Lynn advised that having a plan ready for implementation following the DEP departure of the site would provide the best opportunity for success with the site remediation. He also reviewed the approximate timeline that would follow the dam breaching.

Mr. Drew advised the Board that a presentation would be made to the Township Council, but that the Planning Board is being asked to review the concepts and make a recommendation. The Environmental Commission chose concept #1 as the most feasible and best choice due to the least amount of permitting required, less time for implementation, and as the least expensive option. When asked what the cost to taxpayers would be, the professionals replied that the main cost would be long-term maintenance of the site. The Board members discussed funding that would require in-kind matches, and ownership of the lake and surrounding property. Other ideas included creating a park with boardwalk and benches. The Board concurred that remediation of the site is necessary and would enhance the town center location.

The Chair opened the meeting to the public. David Watson Hallowell made several comments about the ownership of the lake bottom. With no one else present wishing to address the Board on this issue, the Chairman closed the public portion by unanimous consent of the Board.

**Motion** by Chris Rosica with a **second** by Michael Siesta to approve Concept #1 for the West Milford Lake Dam Project.

Roll Call:                    Yes - Mayor Bettina Bieri, Richard McFadden, Douglas Ott, Chris Rosica, Clinton Smith, Geoffrey Syme, Michael Siesta, Councilman Philip Weisbecker, Chairman Andrew Gargano.  
No - None.

Douglas Ott made several comments about the Environmental Commission and the work accomplished by them over the past 40 years. He also noted that Mr. Drew and Mr. Sparkes had acquired numerous grants over the past ten years, with many grants resulting from prior grants, and gave several examples of the grant funds made available to the Township as a result of their efforts.

### **MINUTES**

**Motion** by Michael Siesta with a **second** by Richard McFadden to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2008 Regular Meeting.

Roll Call:                    Yes - Mayor Bettina Bieri, Richard McFadden, Douglas Ott, Chris Rosica, Clinton Smith, Geoffrey Syme, Michael Siesta, Chairman Andrew Gargano.  
No - None.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Chairman Gargano advised that the Master Plan Subcommittee would meet on May 1, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Drew noted that the regional master plan was expected to be adopted July 19, 2008, but meeting prior to that would be advisable.

The Design Standards Subcommittee planned to meet on April 22 between 4:30 and 6:00.

The Ordinance Subcommittee would meet to discuss various ordinance recommendations regarding soil fill and removal, lake commercial zones and escrow fee amendments. The Chairman advised that the Planning Director would get dates together and advise the committee members via email.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, **motion** was made to adjourn the April 3, 2008 Workshop meeting of the Planning Board at 10:18 p.m. On a Voice Vote, all were in favor of adjourning by unanimous consent.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted by

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary